00154

1955/03/24

Form FS-412
Imp. Le Van Tân - 53.453

SECRET File — Policy March

PRIORITY

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FROM : PARIS

DATE : March 24, 1955, 1900

No. : 600

CLASSIFICATION : SECRET

RECEIVED : March 25, 1130
Typed: March 25, 1540

P R I O R I T Y

PRIORITY SENT DEPARTMENT 4107 REPEATED INFORMATION PRIORITY SAIGON 600

Re Embassy telegrams 4070 and 4074.

At meeting including Ely, Risterucci, Roux and Young this morning, French submitted for our consideration soonest proposed text to be used as basis for Franco-American demarche Saigon by Generals Ely and Collins to Diem on one hand, and leader sects on other. French proposed that if we agreeable demarche be made following Ely's return (he leaving tomorrow night March 25); leaving it, however, to discretion Ambassador Collins and Daridan as to whether situation warrants demarche being made before Ely arrives. French recommend no publicity be attached this demarche if and when made.

We said we would refer text French proposal to Department and Ambassador Collins immediately and expressed hope we would be in position indicate our reaction by sometime tomorrow. French underlined demarche designed gain additional time within which consider fundamental aspects of problem along lines indicated to us yesterday, and made clear they did not consider demarche as likely achieve anything more than means gain additional time.

Young made two comments on text: (A) Last sentence in Paragraph 1 might be premature this stage in any such demarche because strengthening Government, however much we press for it, as Collins and Ely have been doing is most delicate issue with Diem; in any event, this is important matter for State Department and Collins to decide; and (B) any demarche to sects must emphasize authority National Government. Important to note first part of same paragraph contains strong support Diem. French officials all expressed complete agreement this point, and wondered if perhaps their language went too far.

Free translation text given us by French follows:

"I am transmitting below instruction that the French and U.S. Governments, after consulting on recent developments situation Vietnam, have jointly agreed to address to you at same time as to General (Ely/Collins).

"You will, in agreement with your (French/American) colleague, request a meeting with President Diem to which you will go together. You will express to the President the sympathy of the Government (French/American) for

DECLASSIFIED
NND 819053

SECRET

courageous struggle that he continues lead with view strengthening foundations and structure National Government Vietnam. You will confirm to him that the Government (French/American) considers that success of this undertaking is of highest interest for entire free world and that it is more firmly agreed than ever to furnish him all assistance in its power that he will request to this end (for General Ely only: You will note on this occasion vote taken day before yesterday in Senate on budget of Associated States which has emphasized quasi-unanimity of non-Communist parties in favor of Government's program).

1) "You will indicate that Government (French/American) remains convinced that a pacific solution of present conflict in which the sects oppose the Government is possible and that a search for such a solution ought to be essential object of President's preoccupations. French Government desires a renewal of contact between qualified representative of sects and President and it is disposed to give its advise and should occasion arise its good offices in order on one hand to avoid all disorders, which would only compromise rehabilitation (redressement) of Free Vietnam and aid (faire le jeu) its adversaries, and on other, to seek conditions for a definitive settlement of problems that integrations of sects in national community poses. It considers this settlement as an indispensable preliminary (prealable) to effective pursuit of a program of rehabilitation (redressement) begun by President and it believes that in interest Vietnam at this critical point its development, this settlement be conceived within larger framework of a participation in governmental action, under forms to be determined, of all (ensemble) representative elements of nation.

"2) You will, on other hand, contact jointly with your colleague (French/American) qualified representatives of sects, and express to them understanding of Government (French/American) of delicate problems posed by integration of groups which they lead in national community. You will emphasize clearly that Government (French/American) is not unaware of considerable rôle that these groups have played during hostilities in struggle against Communism, and that it is fully conscious in addition of important contribution that they can make to effort of national reconstruction which is in progress. But you will underline at same time that this contribution could, in opinion of Government (French/American) only bear fruit and place Free Vietnam in position to triumph in test imposed on it on express condition that this contribution fall under authority of National Government, within general framework of its action and in exclusive interest of nation. You will indicate finally that Government (French/American) would consider that, in present state of affairs, all resort to force or to disorder in order to resolve present conflict would be contrary to interest of Free Vietnam, because it would only powerfully contribute to a strengthening in minds of free nations who are engaged in supporting efforts of National Government feeling of futility of their hopes for rehabilitation (redressement). You will emphasize this regard that adversaries of present policy of two governments, encouraged besides by propaganda of Communist world, would, in disorders which could occur, derive new arguments in order to undermine all efforts to assist on part of two governments. In opinion of latter, a national government of Vietnam dominated by sects, could not in spite of popular roots claimed by latter represent nation; this would tend to be of a nature to provoke strongest reactions in democratic world and encourage

600 from PARIS

SECRET

solutions of last resort.

"In these conditions Government (French/American) desires that contact be resumed between sects and National Government and declares itself ready, in common interest of Vietnam and free world to facilitate search for an application of a formula of integration of sects in national community which, taking into account preceding preoccupations, would calm at same time concerns of groups in question and would be aimed at maximum mobilization of strength and talents they represent in favor of common effort of Vietnam and its allies of democratic world."

ACHILLES

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

7 copies
bax

SECRET